

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 5

March 12, 2013

SUBJECT: INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR BRAVERY - THE MEDAL OF VALOR AND
THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT PURPLE HEART - REVISED

PURPOSE: This Order revises Section 3/756.05 of the Department Manual to allow retired officers and civilian employees to be eligible for the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Purple Heart.

PROCEDURE: The LAPD Purple Heart may be awarded retroactively to retired officers who meet the LAPD Purple Heart criteria. Also, in special circumstances, the Chief of Police may award the LAPD Purple Heart to civilian employees. Attached is the Manual Section regarding the LAPD Purple Heart criteria, with the revisions indicated in italics.

AMENDMENTS: This Order amends Section 3/756.05 of the Department Manual.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY: The Commanding Officer, Internal Audits and Inspections Division, will review this directive and determine whether an audit or inspection will be conducted in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.30.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Charlie Beck', with a stylized, looped design.

CHARLIE BECK
Chief of Police

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION "D"

DEPARTMENT MANUAL
VOLUME III
Revised by Special Order No. 5, 2013

756.05 INDIVIDUAL AWARDS FOR BRAVERY. The conferring of an award for bravery *will* be in recognition of a single action performed by a Department employee. Several commendatory incidents of bravery, each being worthy of an award, will not qualify the employee for a higher award.

Medal of Valor. The Medal of Valor is the Department's highest award and may be awarded to *employees* who distinguish themselves by conspicuous bravery or heroism above and beyond the normal demands of police service.

To be awarded the Medal of Valor, an *employee must* have performed an act displaying extreme courage while consciously facing imminent peril.

It is awarded by the Board of Police Commissioners and is presented by the Chief of Police in the name of the Department at the annual Medal of Valor awards ceremony. The award consists of a medal, ribbon, lapel pin, and citation.

Police Medal. The Police Medal may be awarded to employees who distinguish themselves by bravery or heroism above and beyond the normal demands of duty, but to a lesser degree than required for the Medal of Valor. It is awarded by the Chief of Police in the name of the Department and presented by the Chief, or the Chief's designee, at an appropriate ceremony. The award consists of a medal, lapel pin, and ribbon.

The Los Angeles Police Department Purple Heart. The LAPD Purple Heart may be awarded to:

- Officers who sustain a traumatic physical injury as a result of a suspect's action(s) during an on-duty tactical situation; or,
- Officers who die in the line of duty as a direct result of a suspect's action(s). In cases involving an officer's line of duty death, not the direct result of a suspect's action(s), the Commendations Board may exercise discretion to award the medal.

Note: In special circumstances, the Chief of Police may award the LAPD Purple Heart to civilian employees.

The Los Angeles Police Department Purple Heart is awarded by the Commendations Board in the name of the Department and presented by the Chief of Police at an appropriate ceremony. The award consists of a medal, lapel pin, and ribbon.

The Commendations Board has the discretion to consider any request involving officers killed in the line of duty and officers who suffer traumatic physical injury in the line of duty. Specifically, officers, who through no fault of their own, sustain a traumatic physical injury during the performance of job related functions such as a violent encounter with the criminal element, a rescue operation, a hazardous materials exposure, a riot, a significant traffic collision or other life altering accident will be considered.

**DEPARTMENT MANUAL
VOLUME III
Revised by Special Order No. 5, 2013**

Requests to be considered for the *LAPD* Purple Heart will be critically scrutinized to ensure the spirit and intent of the award is given to truly deserving officers or their families. It is not the intent of the Department to confer the award to officers that are injured in non-tactical situations.

The *LAPD* Purple Heart will not be awarded if the injury occurred as a direct result of the officer's negligent or inappropriate actions.

Area/division commanding officers *must* follow procedures for submitting Commendation Reports, as outlined in Department Manual Section 3/756.

The *LAPD* Purple Heart can be awarded retroactively to the families of officers killed in the line of duty and to active *and retired* officers who meet the *LAPD* Purple Heart criteria.

Office of Administrative Services (OAS) will be responsible for contacting the families of officers killed in the line of duty who meet the criteria to receive the *LAPD* Purple Heart. If a family desires to be considered for the *LAPD* Purple Heart, *OAS* will act on the family's behalf to contact the Area/division of occurrence to which the officer was last assigned. The Area/division of occurrence *will* obtain records of the incident from Medical Liaison Section (*MLS*) and submit a completed Commendation Report, via their chain of command, to the Commendations Board.

Definitions and Guidelines for the *LAPD* Purple Heart.

- Traumatic physical injury is defined as a substantial bodily injury, permanent disfigurement or serious impairment of the physical condition;
- General guidelines for traumatic physical injuries that merit the *LAPD* Purple Heart are as follows:
 - * Any serious and substantial physical injury which involved a substantial risk of death;
 - * A serious physical injury requiring inpatient treatment and a protracted hospital stay;
 - * The loss or protracted physical impairment of the function of any body part; or,
 - * Serious physical disfigurement.

Note: The injury must have required treatment by a medical doctor for the injuries received in the line of duty and must have been a matter of an official record.

Commendation Reports submitted for officers who suffered traumatic physical injury in the line of duty should include an Authorization to Release Medical Information, Form 05.03.00, available from MLS, completed and signed by the officer, whenever possible.